



## Block-Buster

Info and Inspiration for Creatives: October 2018



FEATURE

### ***Navigating the Void***

You've just finished a major painting, taken your last bows at the end of the play's run, or sent your manuscript off to be published. You ride the high for a while, but if there's no new idea waiting in the wings, unease can steal in. Will

the next thing be as good? Have I run dry?

Author Charles Au Lavoie agrees that "There is a void [between projects]...The experience of it is not fun."

It's enough to make a creative run for the hills, or allow the *What next?* blues to set in.

### **What have you learned?**

Author and speaker Danielle LaPorte (DanielleLaPorte.com) suggests we regard the period between projects as necessary integration time, or as "diving debriefing". Although she acknowledges that the void is uncomfortable, LaPorte believes: "If we bypass this place, we miss the most empowering insights of all the work we have done - insights that will fuel us on the next journey."\*

Keeping the mood light, take inventory of any pieces you've started. Is there one that's calling to you now? Or, sit quietly in your workspace and let your mind roam. Imagine there are no obstacles, only limitless potential. What will you create?

### **At play in the fields of the mind**

Lavoie uses activities like gardening to soothe him and give his intellect a rest while he allows a new idea to come into his mind and take shape. "When I'm in the garden, I'm playing, not debating word choice or moving sentences around," he says.

In *A Whack on the Side of the Head*, author Roger von Oech confirms the value of play in sparking new ideas, because it "loosens mental locks" and generates an uncensored, free flow of ideas.

Can you think of other ways to navigate the void? Pay attention to how you usually get through this period. It is possible to embrace this as an important rest and regeneration phase, and adopt a more playful, curious mindset as you look ahead to new work.

\*Thanks to Danielle LaPorte and Dee Bailey for permission to quote from Danielle's blog post:

<http://www.daniellelaporte.com/creativity-the-corpse-pose-what-to-do-in->

[between-projects/](#)

Thanks also to Charles Au Lavoie for an engaging discussion about this aspect of creativity.



BOOKSHELF

## **Let the Elephants Run: Unlock Your Creativity and Change Everything**

David Usher

House of Anansi Press, Toronto, 2015

Many books along this line have been published over the years, but Usher's unique combination of skills and explorations in various fields give readers a fresh take on lighting the creative fuse. He covers the stages of the creative process and explains why it's important to discover your unique process, and then to document the parts that work so you can repeat them with every new venture.

He also talks about the "emotional arc" of the creative journey. Usher urges readers to note how they're feeling as they create; in effect, to discover their emotional process as artists.

Songwriters and composers can learn from Usher's efficient way of handling those

piles of ideas that often seem too overwhelming to even tackle. It's a sequence of regularly scheduled considering, selecting and winnowing the ideas, long before he decides which "best of the best" will make it to the recording studio.

Usher says that developing your own system for filtering your collected ideas enables you to improve and speed up the process over time, which in turn will likely make you more eager to dip into your "good" folder more often.

He refers to the tasks most creatives love to hate, like accounting and promotion, as our "operational infrastructure", and urges readers to attend to these tasks as a crucial part of their creativity.

Usher draws from Ted talks, tech start-ups, and innovative performers to give readers actionable ideas, confidence boosters, and new habits to incorporate to ensure they remain creative over the long term.



## BRIGHT IDEAS

Let your imagination soar as you contemplate novel ways to manifest and display your creations.

Printmaker and painter Deborah Russell used the edge of a credit card to manipulate acrylic paint on glass plates to create her abstract colour prints. What new materials could you incorporate in your process – or invent?

Can you make your usually solitary work interactively available to your audience? What conventions could you transcend? What barriers could you dissolve?



#### COACHING NEWS

I have spaces available for in-person coaching at a café of your choice in the Ottawa area, or over the phone. Please contact me at [clare.thorbes@gmail.com](mailto:clare.thorbes@gmail.com) to arrange your free first consultation.

---



## WISE WORDS

“In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when we’re used to clicking and browsing and having constant choice, painting simply sits there silently and begs you to notice the smallest of detail.”

— *Kehinde Wiley, portrait painter*

## Clare Thorbes

Clare Thorbes is a creativity coach and a visual artist specializing in portraiture. She helps writers, artists and performers overcome creative blocks and build a fulfilling life in the arts.

[About Clare](#)



Learn more about Creativity Coaching

---

*Copyright © 2018 Clare Thorbes, Creativity Coach, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list

